

June 18, 2010

Water Quality Protection Division



Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico Region 6 Update

Subject: **Water Quality Division Update # 35**
 Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico

Date: June 18, 2010

Reporting Period: June 17, 2010 1300 – June 18, 2010 1300

June 18, 2010

Forecast

- The nearshore oil forecast created by NOAA on 6/17/10 at 2100 CDT for 6/18/10 at 1200 CDT (Figure 1) indicates that the main part of the oil slick will be east of Louisiana. Winds are forecast to be light and variable over the weekend. The oil slick is projected to move slowly eastward. Shoreline impacts are may occur between Dauphin Island, Al and Panama City, Fl.
- The offshore oil forecast created by NOAA on 6/17/10 at 1900 CDT for 6/18/10 at 1200 CDT (Figure 2). An oily sheen still remains in an eddy (Eddy Franklin) that has pinched off from the Loop Current. Trajectories indicate that the oily sheen will remain in Eddy Franklin. Currents that carried the oily sheen into Eddy Franklin have changed, cutting the eddy off from the spill. It is not anticipated that the oily sheen will enter the Florida Current. Oil in Eddy Franklin will likely biodegrade and photo-oxidize.

Monitoring and Assessment

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit on the review of incoming water and sediment quality monitoring data, including results from water samples analyzed for dispersants and sediment toxicity testing results.
- Attending regular meetings and calls with Region 4, HQ, & REOC.
- 1 staff member currently located in 8th floor REOC throughout the day.

Drinking Water

- Drinking water intakes, public drinking water wells, and domestic wells have not been impacted by the oil sheen and are not projected to be impacted.
- EPA Region 6 is providing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) daily situation report as well as data summaries as they become available.
- EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate closely with the LDHH on all drinking water issues.

Data Management – Mapping Efforts

- Updated the Shoreline Coastal Assessment Team (SCAT) and spill trajectory data.

NPDES

- Continue to participate in discussions regarding options for addressing the moratorium on drilling as it impacts NPDES Permit GMG290000 (a conference call was held today, June 17, 2010).

June 18, 2010

- Participating in discussions on options for disposal/treatment/permitting of oil skimming decant water.
- NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch continue to be available to provide technical assistance as needed.

Coastal Programs

Louisiana Large-Scale Coastal Barrier Plan:

- Dredging and stockpiling material has begun, with two dredges working, one east and one west of the Mississippi River. No lab results are available yet for the material dredged from the River. Shaw Group's current best case estimate for constructing all six segments is 145 days and 18-20 million cubic yards of material but several assumptions have been questioned by the Corps and other agencies.
- Plans developed by an interagency working group (including EPA) were approved at the end of 2009 to address a shortage of capacity for the placement of dredged material from Corps of Engineers operations to maintain navigation depths in the upper reaches of Houston Ship Channel and the Bayport Ship Channel, Texas. Construction of new marsh and upland habitat placement areas was scheduled to begin next week, but the project is now on hold, pending a final decision by the Corps to reassign these dredges to the Louisiana sand berm project.

Corps Emergency Authorizations for Coastal Protection Features:

- Coordination is ongoing with the Corps, OW, and Region 4 on a continuing series of emergency authorization requests for incremental work to install booms, sand bags, tiger dams, concrete blocks, rocks, dredges, and similar structures in the Chandeleur Sound, Barataria Bay, Terrebonne Bay, and adjoining waterways. At least 20 different proposals, or variations thereof, have been formally reviewed to date.

OW Ecological Impact Analyses:

- Discussions continue regarding the marsh protection and marsh remediation alternatives and techniques.
- Ongoing coordination, through OW, with the Association of National Estuary Programs and NEP Directors regarding baseline characterization data, habitat and restoration priorities, and a request to OWOW to provide a bridge between the NRDA process and the NEPs.

June 18, 2010

Corps Navigation Maintenance Dredging:

- Maintenance of the Houston Ship Channel for commercial navigation may be effected by the reassignment of dredges to the LA sand berm project (see above).
- The Corps is employing oil detection kits on the dredges, a technique coordinated with EPA and Corps research facilities during the 2008 Mississippi River oil spill. In addition, new ship decontamination sites have been established in the lower Mississippi River and Southwest Pass which may be within the area of influence of the EPA-designated ocean disposal site.
- Discussions are underway regarding marsh remediation efforts and initial agency coordination is occurring regarding monitoring the long-term landscape-scale coastal habitat impacts.

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

- There have been no changes to the list of CWPPRA projects in the vicinity of oil impacted areas since 6/17/10.
- Members of the CWPPRA program observed a small patch of oiled marsh in Terrebonne Bay while on a field trip for a proposed restoration site (figure 3). The location was documented by members of NRCS.

June 18, 2010

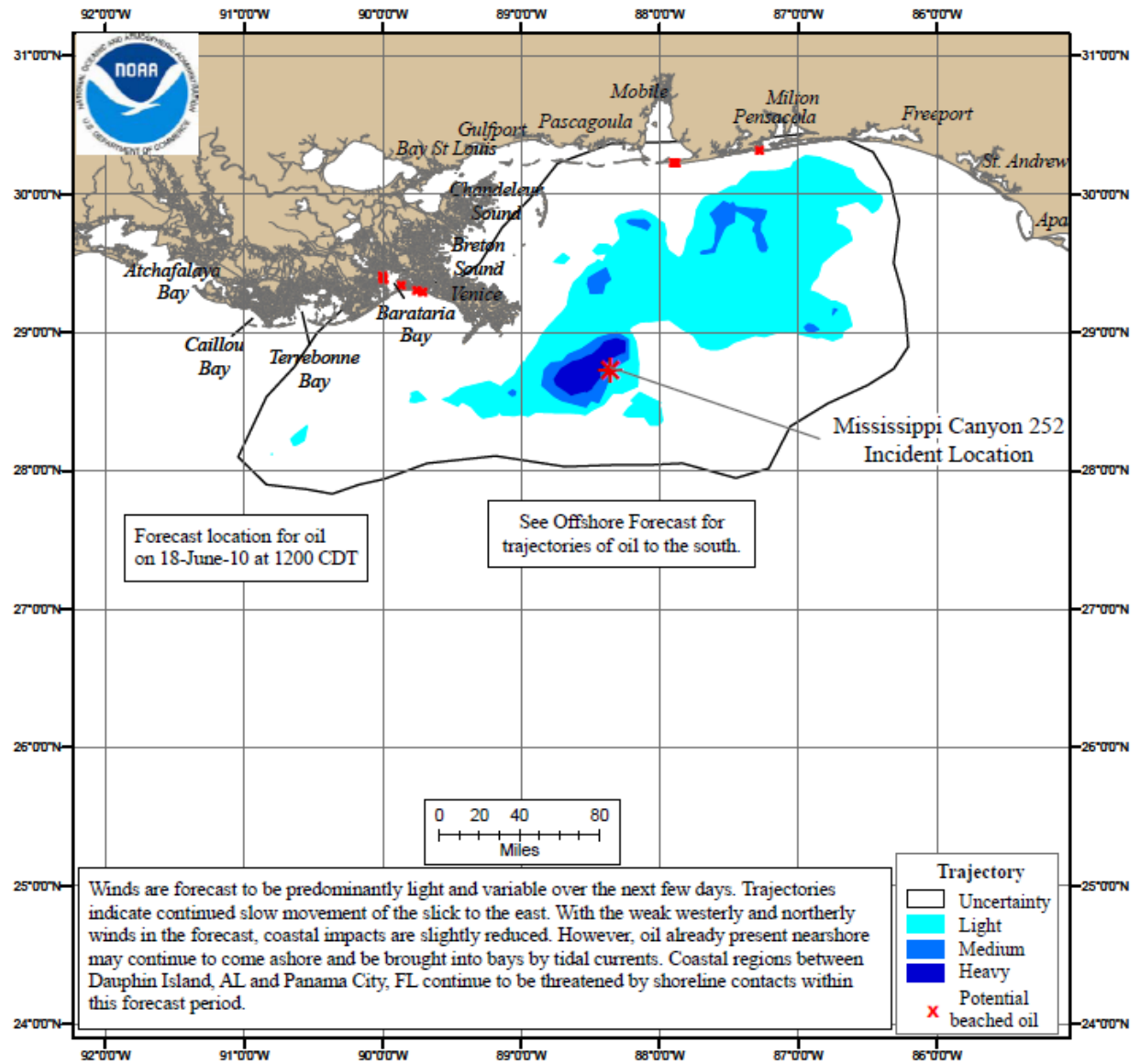


Figure 1. NOAA nearshore oil slick trajectory forecast for 6/18/10

June 18, 2010

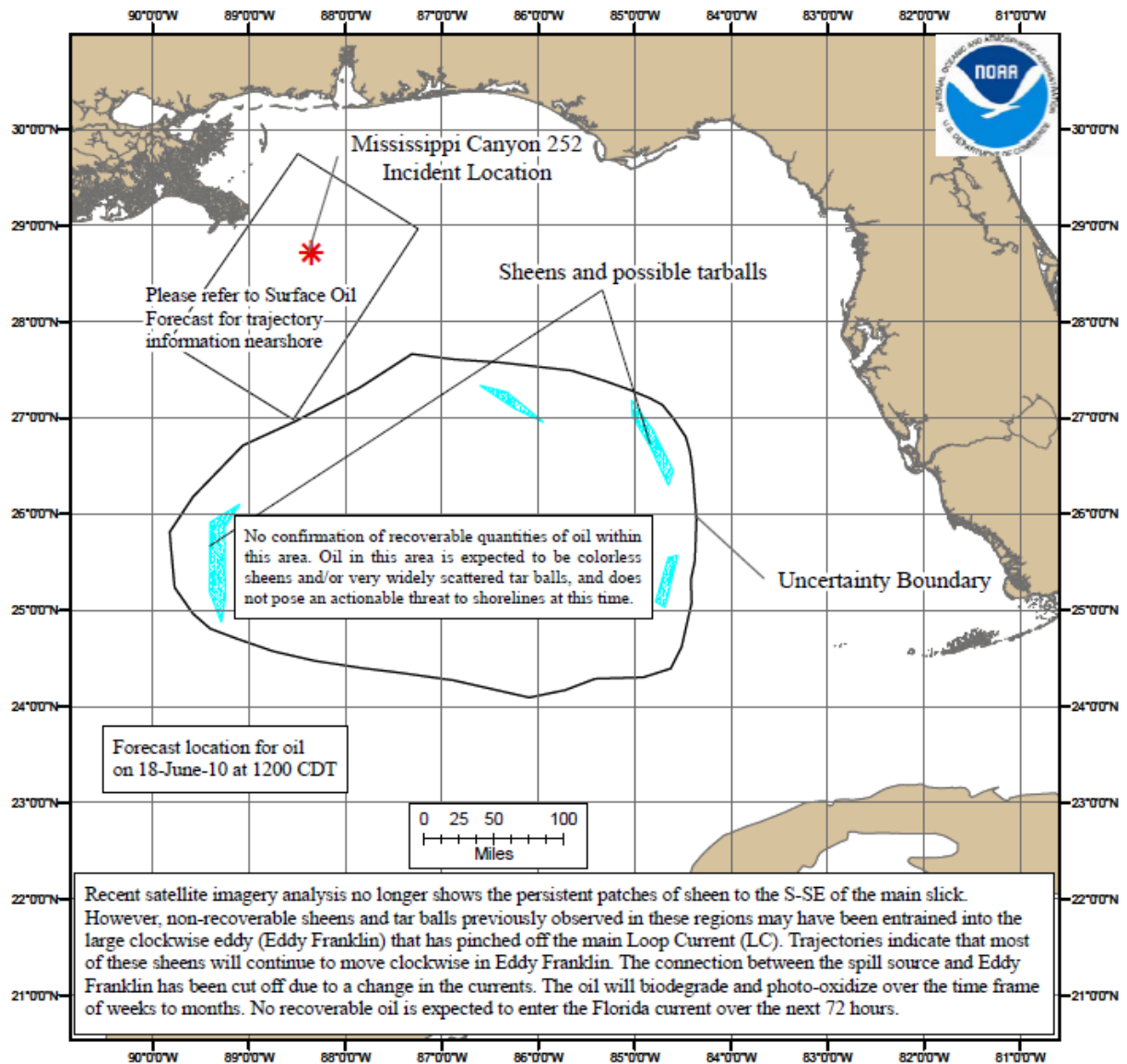


Figure 2. NOAA offshore oil slick trajectory forecast for 6/16/10.

June 18, 2010



Figure 3. Oiled marsh observed on CWPPRA field trip.